

*Integrated Performance
Monitoring Report
Sustainability Report
Performance Period January 2004-March 2004*

April 2004

STATE OF HAWAII
Department of Education
Department of Health
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Division
Early Intervention Section

Integrated Performance Monitoring Report
Department of Education
Department of Health
January 2004–March 2004

Introduction

This quarterly performance report reflects the joint commitment of the Departments of Health and Education to provide a comprehensive array of educational and behavioral and mental health supports and services to students who require those services to benefit from their educational opportunities. An integrated performance monitoring report is a logical continuation of the established joint integrated service delivery mechanism developed and implemented by the Departments and is a part of the commitment to visible accountability by providing information essential in determining the maintenance of the critical infrastructure and level of system performance. This joint performance reporting activity is unique to the State of Hawaii.

This is the sixth Quarterly Report submitted by the State of Hawaii pursuant to the September 10, 2002 court order in the Felix v. Lingle, Civil No. 93-00367 DAE. It covers the third quarter of fiscal year 2004 (January 2004 – March 2004) and includes the most recent data available regarding the system, in accordance with agreements made at the March 7, 2003 Status Conference.

On April 8, 2004 at a Status Conference Judge Ezra expressed the opinion that the State of Hawaii is in substantial compliance with Federal Law. The attorneys for the plaintiffs stated that the State has not only maintained and improved services, but has mechanisms for prompt actions should problems arise. Judge Ezra stated that Federal jurisdiction is not allowed once compliance with federal law has been determined and approved a stipulation that releases the State of Hawaii from the oversight of Federal Court 30 days after the publication of the Quarterly Report for the quarter ending March 31, 2004. An appendix to this report contains the stipulation filed on April 16, 2004.

This Integrated Performance Monitoring Report remains the primary conduit for reporting on the State's performance in providing quality services for children and youth with special needs. As such this report continues to provide the information necessary to verify the maintenance of the infrastructure developed and procedures implemented to sustain substantial compliance with the Felix Consent Decree. Information contained in this quarterly report continues to be consistent with the Sustainability Plan submitted to the court and agreed upon in discussions with the Court Master and the Court Monitor. Its continued use provides further evidence of the commitment of the Departments of Education and Health to the use of continuous performance monitoring to maintain and improve the delivery of educational and mental health services to those children and youth in need of such services to benefit from their educational opportunities.

This report provides evidence that the Departments continue to maintain the following:

“(133) A sustainable system of education for children with special needs must include the following four components:

(134) The system must continue to hire and retain qualified teachers and other therapeutic personnel necessary to educate and serve children consistently

(135) The system must be able to continue to purchase the necessary services to provide for the treatment of children appropriate to the individual needs of the child.

(136) The system must be able to monitor itself through a continuous quality management process. The process must detect performance problems at local schools, family guidance centers, and local service provider agencies. Management must demonstrate that it is able to synthesize the information regarding system performance and results achieved for students that are derived from the process and use the findings to make ongoing improvements and, when necessary, hold individuals accountable for poor performance.

(137) The system must be able to ensure teachers, therapists, and other support staff to continue their professional development and improve their skills and knowledge of effective educational and therapeutic methods and techniques.”

(Revised Felix Consent Decree, July 31, 2000, page 20)

December 31, 2003 marked the end of the 18-month “sustainability phase” as set forth in the September 15, 2002 Court Order. The recent Federal Court acceptance of the Stipulation for Step-Down Plan and Termination of the Revised Consent Decree opens a new era in the provision of services to students in need of educational and mental health services. During this quarter, the 17th Annual Research Conference-A System of Care for Children's Mental Health: Expanding the Research Base was held. A focal point of the conference was the release to the Children and Families Subcommittee of the President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health Report (Achieving the Promise: Transforming Mental Health Care in America). The New Freedom Commission promise for children states "our communities, states, and nation provide access to comprehensive, home-and community-based family-centered services and supports for children with mental health disorders and their families, and create conditions that promote positive mental health for all children." The report describes transformation as a vision, a process, and an outcome.

Hawaii's system for provision of services to children with these special needs appears to be in alignment with not only the children's promise, but has moved through many of the transformational stages of community change. [Correspondingly the content of this report may change over time to include better-defined and more responsive indicators to the provision of quality educational and mental health services to these children and youth.]-Do we need to say this? Is the report going to change before we finish our 5 quarters of reporting under the Stipulation? If the plan is to change the report while we are under the Stipulation, I think we need to have further discussion on the matter.

Summary of Overall Performance

In the February 2004 Felix Monitoring Project: Monitor’s Status Report on Compliance and Sustainability the Court Monitor concluded the following:

- “the state is maintaining its obligation to provide educational and therapeutic services to children and families identified through a more responsive system”,
- “DOE and DOH have demonstrated that there is capacity to monitor performance and develop corrective action strategies to address identified deficits”, and

- “there has been tremendous progress during the period of the Consent Decree.”

The Monitor further iterated in the February report that information regarding the level of system performance is generally not widespread in spite of the Department’s efforts. Subsequently, it is not surprising that some community concerns linger regard the ability of the State to maintain services absent the oversight of the Federal Court.

In the first quarterly report submitted for July 2002-September 2002, the Departments asserted the following:

- Adequate numbers of qualified professionals adequately distributed to meet student needs,
- A comprehensive array of supports and services necessary to identify and provide specific individualized supports and services,
- Adequate funding to implement necessary programs and maintain infrastructure and capacity, and
- Information management systems to assist administrators at all levels identify and respond to system performance issues.

During this past quarter, the departments have continued to increase the number of qualified teachers and School-Based Behavioral Health (SBBH) professionals while maintaining central office positions and care coordinators that constitute a functioning system infrastructure. Many of the initial fiscal constraints due to poor economic forecasts have been removed and the departments continue to dedicate sufficient funding that allows the continuous implementation of necessary programs and infrastructure to meet student support and service needs. Improvements and expanded reliance on the use of data management systems continue to provide information for program improvement activities and resource distribution. In addition, a major quality assurance initiative helped to further refine the extensive system for statewide performance management and quality assurance practices.

When gauging maintenance or improvement in system infrastructure and performance, it is important to examine the progress that has been made since the inception of the Felix-driven system improvements. In the review year, thirty-seven of the forty-one complexes, or 90%, met the targeted goal. For the 565 youth reviewed this year, system performance was found to be acceptable for 93%, a slight increase over last fiscal year’s finding of the system performing acceptably well for 91% of youth. Statewide in fiscal year 2004, 94% of children and youth reviewed were found to have acceptable child status. This performance goal has remained stable from fiscal year 2003, where child status was also found to be doing acceptably well for 94% of youth.

The above information contrasts to results over the 2002-2003 school year where the system performed acceptably for 91% (539) of the youth reviewed in the Continued Integrated Monitoring and Improvement Process. Furthermore, child status was acceptable for a full 94% of the youth. This is compelling evidence that not only is the system of services performing consistently and dependably for these youth but that the vast majority of Felix-class youth are doing well across measures of child well-being. The State’s forward movement in building quality management and continuous improvement systems has resulted in a wide-scale focus on effective practices and positive results for youth served.

During this second quarter of this fiscal year (October-December 2003), the Departments continued to provide supports and services to students in need of specialized services in accordance with applicable Federal and State laws, rules and regulations, and Federal Court Orders. An independent review of system performance conducted during this quarter by the Felix Court Monitor on 80 randomly selected students from groups that historically have presented the most challenging behaviors and learning difficulties determined the following:

- “The system throughout the state is much more developed and organized than even two years ago.”
- “There is a greater range of alternative educational programs and settings available to students.”
- “Appropriate policies appear to be in place to meet the obligations of federal law and the consent decree.”
- “Identified problems are more refinement and less capacity or infrastructure development.”
- “The system is consistently more responsive, effective and accountable than it has been in the past and substantially complies with the principles and expectations set in the Felix Consent Decree.”

As will be evident throughout this report, the Departments' own performance monitoring and data analyses consistently confirm overall maintenance of system infrastructure and improved system performance.

The Departments, through its monitoring, continue to identify areas where system performance requires additional specific planned and targeted responses. These challenges are consistent with the findings of the Court Monitor's Independent Review and represent situations where local problem solving capacity to address particularly challenging student characteristics and needs beyond the norm are insufficient. These areas include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Further refinement of the peer review component of the quality assurance process to make it more effective and efficient for specific students and staff,
- Additional coordination between schools, programs, and departments to improve transitions for students between schools and programs, and
- More effective staff orientation, coaching and training programs in order to minimize disruptions due to staff turnover.
- Greater analytical and problem solving resources available to middle managers in order to more effectively address those “out of the norm” individual student needs.

Recent Events

Aside from the aforementioned court hearings, the following occurred during the 3rd Quarter of SY03-04.

- Integrated Internal Reviews for 22 complexes were held. Acceptable system performance was found in 19 complexes and in 21 complexes student status was acceptable.

- Hawaii's accountability system was described at the aforementioned national conference as an example of a data-based system that assesses system performance on a regular basis, in the "here and now," for purposes of improvement. This national recognition of Hawaii's accomplishments validates the work of countless individuals and families that have worked through many years to build an accountable services system.
- Considerable community discussion was held regarding education reform.

System Response

The cumulative performance of the complexes on Integrated Internal Reviews demonstrate the Departments' commitment to assuring that adequate manpower, service capacities and infrastructure supports are in place -- year to date, only three (3) complexes have not maintained acceptable performance as opposed to six (6) the previous year. All of those complexes with low performance last year improved to acceptable performance this year.

The continued demonstration of sustainability of results and strengthening of the service delivery system depends upon the Departments addressing a number of fundamental areas -- each are equally committed to the ongoing examination of issues in order to achieve a self-sustaining service system in the years ahead. Briefly outlined below are the areas and their impact on the system. Long-term attention to these areas continues to be important even after Federal Court oversight is removed to continue to strengthen and improve the system.

Leadership and Accountability for Implementing Improvements and Achieving Results

Persistent focused monitoring and evaluation of system performance and procedural efficacy has proven instrumental in achieving the Federal Court's recognition of "substantial compliance" and the improving performance during the sustainability period. The commitment to results for students-oriented activities based on a broad understanding of pertinent statutes, policies, and initiatives demonstrates the need to continually clarify roles, responsibilities, and performance expectations for staff at all levels.

Support to continue refining and improving these institutionalized behaviors will help assure that requisite management functions persist well beyond incumbent staff and are instrumental in current development and immediate implementation. The movement beyond compliance at all levels of system performance consistent with a commitment to excellence requires departmental leadership to engage in visible accountability in performance measurement. The end result of desired system performance is, and must continue to be, improved educational, behavioral, and mental health outcomes for children and youth.

Qualified Personnel

The Departments have demonstrated the ability to attract and retain sufficient numbers of qualified professional staff to maintain a service delivery infrastructure. The continued focused training of staff to refine their professional knowledge and skill base is important in providing timely, effective, and appropriate educational and related services to students in need of such services. Addressing the human resources development needs due to staff increases, turnover, and mobility in the area of procedures and practices requires considerable resources and coordination.

The positive impact of the DOE Office of Human Resources targeted placement of qualified teachers and coordination with the Department of Human Resources Development regarding School Based Behavioral Health (SBBH) staff underscores the capacity and the importance of addressing personnel issues in a flexible and creative manner. The soon to be released SBBH staff handbook and newly drafted Autism Spectrum Disorder Practice Guidelines illustrate the continued commitment to widespread capacity development that incorporate improved and integrated instructional and service delivery practices.

Both Departments continue the dissemination of the work of the nationally recognized Evidence-Based Practices Task Force to provide a continued articulation of effective practices in case management and service delivery techniques to ensure youth with intensive mental health needs receive continual attention in order to assure positive outcomes in the least restrictive environment. Effective service delivery mechanisms need to be assured in classrooms and schools as well as when working with families in the home and community setting. Because new personnel constantly enter the service delivery and teaching workforce at all levels, and effective practices need consistent reinforcement, training needs to be continuous versus a point in time endeavor. Across the system, consistent training, supervision and focus on problem solving and achieving results for children and families is paramount.

Sustaining a Commitment to Quality Assurance

All levels continue to improve in the consistent implementation of guidelines that systematize a statewide system for quality assurance (QA). These QA practices provide a focus on assuring meaningful peer review and local-level quality assurance systems improve system performance and outcomes for students. The QA practices are being utilized in the area of ASD in order to provide the same structure for examining student specific information as a means of focused inquiry to examine trends and patterns important for improved student outcomes and system performance.

Commitment to Continued Performance Monitoring

The benefits of the Continuous Integrated Monitoring Improvement Process are notable. Ongoing objective performance monitoring and reporting of performance data are vital for feedback to the system regarding practices that are working as well as discerning areas that require focused attention. Consistent and system wide monitoring through the integrated internal reviews, tracking of key performance indicators, and QA generated data allow for communication of performance expectations throughout the system and tracking of the system's effectiveness in meeting its commitments. The system requires

further monitoring and improvement to assure the validity and reliability of findings can be clearly communicated to a variety of shareholders to alleviate concerns regarding system performance.

Report Format

Following this brief introductory overview, the report format is as follows. The second section reports on the results of Internal Reviews conducted by the DOE and DOH during the quarter. Complexes and Family Guidance Centers conduct this evaluation of system performance through aggregated data and results of case-based reviews. Community members also participate in the reviews that continue to provide information for local service delivery improvements. Future reports written for public consumption will combine information on Internal Reviews and the Statewide Quality Assurance system into a new section titled System Quality.

The third section presents information specific to the DOE. This section has two major sections: Infrastructure and Performance.

The fourth section contains information specific to the Department of Health (DOH). Within this section are reports from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Division and Early Intervention Services.

Within each of the sections, primarily in the summary, the Departments include their specific commitments to address issues that are identified. For issues related to Integrated Performance Monitoring, both Departments make the improvement commitments jointly.